

brate, let us set aside our daily concerns and give thanks for the providence bestowed upon us.

Though our traditions have evolved, the spirit of grace and humility at the heart of Thanksgiving has persisted through every chapter of our story. When President George Washington proclaimed our country's first Thanksgiving, he praised a generous and knowing God for shepherding our young Republic through its uncertain beginnings. Decades later, President Abraham Lincoln looked to the divine to protect those who had known the worst of civil war, and to restore the Nation "to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union."

In times of adversity and times of plenty, we have lifted our hearts by giving humble thanks for the blessings we have received and for those who bring meaning to our lives. Today, let us offer gratitude to our men and women in uniform for their many sacrifices, and keep in our thoughts the families who save an empty seat at the table for a loved one stationed in harm's way. And as members of our American family make do with less, let us rededicate ourselves to our friends and fellow citizens in need of a helping hand.

As we gather in our communities and in our homes, around the table or near the hearth, we give thanks to each other and to God for the many kindnesses and comforts that grace our lives. Let us pause to recount the simple gifts that sustain us, and resolve to pay them forward in the year to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 24, 2011, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the people of the United States to come together—whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors—to give thanks for all we have received in the past year, to express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and to share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8756 of November 18, 2011

National Family Week, 2011

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

For generations, American families have empowered our sons and daughters with boundless love, giving them the courage to pursue their dreams. This week, we celebrate the threads of compassion and unity that tie our families together, enrich our communities, and strengthen the fabric of our Nation.

My Administration remains steadfast in our commitment to families across America. To ensure our children get a strong start, we are bolstering early learning programs and promoting education reform that will do more to bring every student the best our schools have to offer. By investing in Pell Grants and community colleges, we are working to make higher education affordable for more families and build a workforce of tomorrow that will excel in the global economy. And by taking executive action to lighten financial burdens on many middle class families, we are making it more affordable to pay back student loans and easier for homeowners to refinance their mortgages. As our families work hard to meet their obligations, these actions will give them the help they need to thrive in the years to come.

During National Family Week, let us also reflect on the contributions and sacrifices of our service members and their loved ones. Our troops and military families serve with valor at home and overseas, and as a Nation we have a moral obligation to serve these patriots as well as they have served us. To better fulfill this promise, First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden launched Joining Forces earlier this year, an initiative that challenges all Americans to make a difference in the lives of our veterans and military families.

As we gather with our loved ones this holiday season, let us pause to give thanks to all those who share in the trials and triumphs of our lives. Our families illuminate our days and bring meaning to our years, and their love has the power to see us through our greatest challenges. This week and throughout the year, let us strive to give back to our friends, families, communities, and neighbors, and to work together in pursuit of our highest ambitions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 20 through November 26, 2011, as National Family Week. I invite all States, communities, and individuals to join in observing this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities to honor our Nation's families.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8757 of November 18, 2011

National Farm-City Week, 2011

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

With tenacity, resilience, and humility, our farmers and ranchers have helped drive our Nation's growth for generations. Season after season, their careful stewardship and dedication brings an abundance of wholesome food, plentiful fiber, a stronger economy, and new opportunities to secure our clean energy future. During National Farm-City